

Remarks

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1 through 45 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 41 being the independent claims. Claims 9, 13, 44, and 45 are amended to eliminate multiple dependencies. Claim 46 is cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Preliminary Amendment is respectfully requested. Applicant believes the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.


Patrick E. Garrett
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 39,987

Date: 7-23-04

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600

291624_1.DOC